

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-06

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 PM-03 SPC-01 NSC-10 NSCE-00

CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 DRC-01 DODE-00 OMB-01

EUR-10 MC-01 EB-03 AID-10 /072 W

----- 032023

R 071111Z JAN 74

FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2720

INFO AMEMBASSY KABUL

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

CINCPAC

S E C R E T ISLAMABAD 0163

LIMDIS

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, MASS, PK, US

SUBJECT: U.S. MILITARY SUPPLY POLICY TOWARD PAKISTAN

1. IN MY FIRST SUBSTANTIVE TALK WITH BHUTTO, HE ASKED IF WE COULD HELP IN "DIESELIZING" THEIR M-47 AND M-48 TANKS. HE SAID HE UNDERSTOOD WE WERE DOING THIS IN IRAN. I SAID I WAS NOT FAMILIAR WITH THE PROCESS, BUT WOULD SEE WHAT I COULD FIND OUT.

2. OUR REVIEW REVEALS THAT THERE IS SOME BACKGROUND HERE ON THIS PROJECT AND THAT CONVERSATIONS WITH THE PAKISTAN MILITARY HAVE BEEN GOING ON AT LEAST SINCE 1969. ALSO, WHILE BHUTTO WAS SEEMINGLY ONLY REFERRING TO AN ENGINE CHANGE, IT IS OBVIOUS HE HAD A MORE COMPLETE MODERNIZATION PROGRAM IN MIND. AT A MINIMUM IT SEEMS

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THE PAKS WOULD WANT CONVERSION TO DIESEL ENGINES,

MODERNIZATION OF SIGHT SYSTEMS INCLUDING NIGHT VIEWING DEVICES, AND UP-GUNNING THE TUBES TO 105MM.

3. APPARENTLY THIS PROJECT HAD ONCE REACHED A STAGE HERE OF WORK ON A PROTO-TYPE AND THE DIESEL ENGINE WAS ALREADY HERE. THE PROJECT WAS APPARENTLY TERMINATED IN 1971 DUE TO THE SUPPLY EMBARGO AS THE U.S. FIRM WAS UNABLE TO OBTAIN NECESSARY PARTS FROM THE STATES.

4. SINCE THE TIME OF MY MEETING WITH BHUTTO, PAKISTAN'S OFFICE OF THE MINISTRY OF DEFENSE HAS ASKED THROUGH ODRP FOR A U.S. SURVEY TEAM TO REVIEW ITS INDIGENOUS FACILITIES SO AS TO DETERMINE THE RESOURCES NECESSARY TO ESTABLISH AN OVERALL TANK MODERNIZATION FACILITY IN PAKISTAN. THIS IS BEING REPORTED SEPARATELY BY ODRP.

5. I HAVE ALSO NOTED A MESSAGE FROM LTGENERAL HOLLIS OF THE U.S. ELEMENT IN CENTO ADDRESSED TO THE JCS WHICH INDICATES THE JCS FOREIGN SECRETARY IN LATE DECEMBER STRONGLY RECOMMENDED TO THE VISITING CENTO SECRETARY GENERAL THE MODIFICATION PROGRAM ON IRANIAN M-47 TANKS AS AN EXAMPLE OF A COLLECTIVE DEFENSE PROJECT GREATLY NEEDED AND DESIRED HERE. THE MESSAGE ALSO INDICATES THAT THE CENTO SECRETARY GENERAL ASKED US TO SUPPORT A PAKISTANI TANK MODIFICATION PROGRAM UTILIZING IRANIAN FACILITIES. IN THE MESSAGE, GENERAL HOLLIS COMMENTS ON THE ADVANTAGES ON INTERCHANGEABILITY AND AVAILABILITY OF PARTS CURRENTLY STOCKED IN THE U.S. SUPPLY SYSTEM. HE NOTED THAT THE PROGRAM WOULD RESULT IN THE TRANSFORMATION OF OBSOLETE EQUIPMENT INTO EFFECTIVE FIGHTING VEHICLES AT MODERATE COST. HE ASKED THE JCS TO COMMENT ON THE FEASIBILITY OF THIS PROPOSAL.

6. I AM NOT GOING TO MAKE A RECOMMENDATION AT THIS TIME ON THIS REQUEST OF BHUTTO OTHER THAN TO JOIN IN WITH THE REQUEST OF GENERAL HOLLIS THAT WE RECEIVE COMMENTS AS TO THE FEASIBILITY OF THE PROJECT. I REALIZE AT SOME POINT THAT "POLICY" AND "FEASIBILITY" WOULD
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BOTH HAVE TO BE PUT IN THE HOPPER BEFORE DECISIONS COULD BE MADE. WHAT I MAY HAVE TO ASK FROM TIME TO TIME, HOWEVER, IS THAT A PARTICULAR PAK REQUEST NOT BE REJECTED OUT OF HAND WITHOUT A STUDY TO SEE WHAT IS REALLY INVOLVED.

7. WE DO NOT KNOW HERE HOW WELL THE IRANIAN PROGRAM IS PROGRESSING, NOR INDEED ITS COST. THE RECORDS

SHOW THAT THE PAKISTANIS TOLD US IN 1969 THAT IRAN HAD PAID ABOUT 40 MILLION DOLLARS TO ESTABLISH THIS OVERALL MODERNIZATION FACILITY. THEY ALSO SAID AT THE TIME THAT THE TANK MODIFICATION KITS COST APPROXIMATELY 57 THOUSAND DOLLARS EACH BUT NO DOUBT THERE HAS BEEN CONSIDERABLE INFLATION SINCE THEN. ALSO I THINK I WOULD WANT THE PENTAGON PLANNERS TO TAKE A BETTER LOOK AT THE PAKISTAN-INDIAN MILITARY EQUIPMENT EQUATIONS THAN I WAS ABLE TO DO HERE IN MY ISLAMABAD 0082.

8. I HAVE THE FOLLOWING TENTATIVE THOUGHT AS THIS MATTER IS BEING STUDIED AT HOME: A) A PART OF THIS UP-GRADING WOULD SEEM FEASIBLE UNDER CURRENT POLICIES, PROVIDING THE RESOURCES COULD BE FOUND. YET IT WOULD SEEM TO ME UNWISE AND A POOR INVESTMENT TO SPEND VERY MUCH MONEY ON THESE OLD TANKS AND LEAVE THE MAIN GUNS AS THEY ARE NOW BECAUSE THEIR VULNERABILITY TO THE LARGER TUBES OF THEIR NEIGHBORS WOULD JUST BE TOO GREAT. IF THE PENTAGON ESTIMATE OF LEVELS OF EFFECTIVE ARMOR PARALLELS MY OWN, I AM NOT SURE A CASE COULD NOT BE MADE FOR ANOTHER ONE TIME EXCEPTION TO POLICY TO COVER THE GUNS-BUT AGAIN I DO NOT THINK I HAVE ENOUGH FACTS TO SO RECOMMEND AT THIS TIME.

9. THERE IS CONSIDERABLE TALK OF A POSSIBLE PAKISTAN-FRENCH DEAL TO SET UP MUNITION FACTORIES HERE WITH THE HELP OF CAPITAL FROM PAKISTAN'S OIL RICH FRIENDS. SUPPOSEDLY THIS WOULD GIVE PAKISTAN SOME EXPORT CAPABILITY TO SUPPLY NEEDS IN SOME OF THE GULF STATES. I HAVE NEVER TAKEN THIS VERY SERIOUSLY, BUT OF COURSE IT COULD BE TRUE. IF BHUTTO CAN RAISE THIS KIND OF MONEY NEEDED, WE SHOULD AT LEAST BE WILLING TO CONSIDER,

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I THINK, IN WHAT MANNER SOME OF IT MIGHT BE USED WITH U.S. CONTRACTORS, AT LEAST UP TO LIMITS THAT WOULD NOT CAUSE US SERIOUS POLICY PROBLEMS.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 07 JAN 1974
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: golinofr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974ISLAMA00163
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: ISLAMABAD
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740159/aaaacdsk.tel
Line Count: 158
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: golinofr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 03 JUN 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <03 JUN 2002 by boyleja>; APPROVED <19 DEC 2002 by golinofr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: U.S. MILITARY SUPPLY POLICY TOWARD PAKISTAN
TAGS: PFOR, MASS, PK, US
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005